

The
**CHRISTIAN
CENTURY**

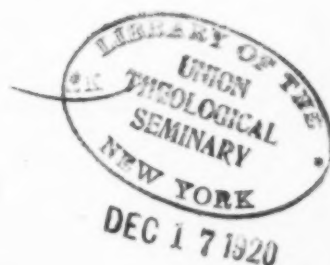
A Journal of Religion

At Tea With Tagore

By Joseph Fort Newton

**Our Creed and Our
Children**

By Raymond M. Alden



Ten Cents a Copy

Dec. 16, 1920

Three Dollars a Year

What and Where Is God?

A Human Answer to the Deep
Religious Cry of the Modern Soul

By

Richard LaRue Swain, Ph. D.

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EDITORIAL

A Prayer for a Heart of Faith

THOU unfathomed Mystery, whose being underlies and fills our vast world and our modest lives, we come faltering and with hushed feet into Thy presence. Our faith is too weak and hesitant to hope for a rich outpouring of Thy blessing, yet Thou canst supply our lack and increase the scant store of courage through which we have been prompted to speak to Thee. Dissatisfied with our way of living, with our short vision, our earthy-mindedness, our bondage to secular and petty things, we long for the freedom of the spirit. Give us the sense of mastery of our circumstances, a freshening of our way of looking at life, a revisioning of those events which rush toward us daily, bringing incessant duties, so that we may see in them what unaided human eyes cannot see.

Forgive us, O Lord, that we make the way to Thy presence so difficult. Our heart tells us that we are made for Thee—for communion, for partnership in Thy work, Thy disappointments and Thy triumphs. Yet the pressure of this world is so strong upon us that our thoughts of Thee have been crowded out with the practicalities of day after day. The sense of Thy presence has been lost and we walk the secluded pathway of prayer with unnatural step and wavering purpose.

Give us, O Father, a heart of faith. Cultivate in us an inspiring awareness of the spiritual nature of all the contacts we make with life—our daily business, our sorrows and disappointments, our drudgeries, our successes, our loves and friendships. Through them all may we hear that finer word whose meaning only they can discern who listen in faith. So may we be delivered from sordidness of soul, from unhappiness, from that haunting sense of

emptiness and futility which comes over us when we have forgotten Thee and Thy good will for all the children of Thy love. We ask in Jesus name. Amen.

Fault-Finding Liberalism

THE increase of journals of dissent is one of the marked characteristics of the years following the great war. This intractable sort of liberalism operates largely in the fields of economics, international politics and literature. Probably more people are at this moment reading after writers of the liberal persuasion than ever before in the history of our country. It is to be confessed, however, that many of these readers are disappointed. They have sought constructive and not captious criticism. It has been too long the attitude of the progressive movement in the world's life to serve as critic. This is a very different function from that of builder. Most citizens follow the socialist so long as he merely recites the iniquities of the present time. The socialist loses a large part of his audience when he offers his remedy. This remedy seems to some to be a paper scheme of salvation imposed by the dogma of the pope of the movement. Many other liberals have much less to offer than the socialist in the way of a remedy. Denunciation is the stock in trade. How characteristic all of this is of the religious liberalism of the past, any student of religion very well knows. Liberal denominations which undoubtedly have a potential constituency of millions in this country have been able to enroll only a few hundred thousand people. Their natural constituency has been driven away by the fault-finding habit. Both in economics and in religion we know pretty well what is wrong. The church must fight dogmatism, sec-

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tarianism, and a narrow individualism. In place of these evils there must come toleration, brotherhood and social spirit. The task of the coming years is that of constructive and not destructive action. The future is with the cause of progress, provided this cause is not weakened by a captious spirit.

Making Sabbatarian Laws Effective

THE question of the enforcement of the old blue Sunday laws on the statute books of the older states is an embarrassing one for the liberal minded clergy of the country. To take a position in favor of lax enforcement of law is abhorrent to any conscientious churchman. Most Christian ministers believe that the Christian Lord's Day came into existence for the purposes of worship and Christian culture. They will never lend themselves to a secularization of the day. The inactivities of Dr. Harry L. Bowlby of the Lord's Day Alliance who is reported to be in favor of closing up amusement places and even local transportation lines on Sunday has been widely commented upon by the secular press, and nearly always adversely. Mr. Bowlby represents the progressive ministers of the country only in part. The latter do not believe in accomplishing the aims of the Lord's Day Alliance by the use of the sword of the civil magistrate. On a vacant lot in a certain city there is every Sunday afternoon a baseball game. The ministers came together on one occasion to discuss this practice. The local ordinances provided that the game could be stopped by the protest of any citizen. Presumably the ministers could make a protest and stop the game. The considerations which have led these men to withhold their protest up to the present time may be of interest to others. These ministers do not permit their own boys to participate in Sunday baseball. They believe it is possible for the children of Christian families to use Sunday afternoon in ways more enjoyable and more uplifting. But they do not believe that a group of religious citizens have a right to impose their conscientious scruples on the whole community by the arm of the law. So far as Sunday laws arise from considerations of social welfare, they should be enforced by the whole citizenship for that reason. When Sunday laws are manifestly drawn in behalf of religious organizations, they should be repealed. The church should ask for no enforcement of religion by law.

How France is Coming Back

THE French Commission in the United States gives out the following information on how France is coming back. Of the factories partially or wholly destroyed 77 per cent are again working and 42 per cent of the pre-war staffs are again employed. Of the great wastes of agricultural land 66 per cent is already reclaimed and will yield crops next year. Many coal mines which it was thought it would require years to redeem are already producing. Many factories are working overtime and the national inclination to neglect work just after the close of hostilities is giving way to a great spirit of industry. The

new tax of 1 per cent on all turnover is yielding large income to the government. Confidence is returning, and while there is much ruin yet to be repaired and while the national debt is an oppressive burden, there is hope and an upward look everywhere. France's chief assurances are in the great number of independent small farms owned by those who work them and in the patriotism of her people. If she could gain her own consent quickly to unload the military system under which the nation still staggers, and if she would adopt habits of temperance that would turn vast areas now devoted to wine over to food products, France would accomplish wonders akin to miracles in the next generation.

Raising the Clergy Fares

RAILROADS of the western territory have raised the clergy fares for the coming year from a half rate to a two-thirds rate. This is interpreted by many as a step preliminary to abolishing the clergy fare altogether. Such a step in our present economic condition would have a profound effect upon the rural church. As all the rural surveys clearly show, large numbers of rural churches secure their preaching from men who live in county seat towns and who travel considerable distances every week to visit these churches. The more rail fares advance, the less feasible it will be for the "railroad preacher" to continue his visitations. The first effect of this would doubtless be disastrous for many churches that now have preaching might become discouraged and quit. The long-time effect would be beneficial. The thing that rural constituencies should do is to form community churches and end the destructive denominational rivalry which is kept alive by means of the "railroad preacher" type of ministry. The first effect of an increase of fare would be to reduce the attendance at conventions and district meetings of the church. But as time went on, the churches might be led to see that there is no more reason for a preacher paying his necessary expenses to keep up these meetings than there is for a corporation to ask an employee to pay his own expenses when sent on a trip by the company. The more expensive it becomes to travel, the more certainly must the churches face in the end their economic burdens. As to the ethics of reduced fares, it would seem that they should include either a wider circle or a smaller. Teachers are community servants who live on small pay and there is the same reason for aiding these as for aiding ministers. If Red Cross workers and many other kinds of community workers are to be asked for a flat fare then there can be no doubt that the ministers should pay an equal rate.

Remarkable Strike Investigation By Religious Forces

LAST summer Denver was in the throes of a street railway strike. For many days no cars were run. There were riots, property was destroyed, seven were killed and several scores injured in riots. Some influential Christian business men, inspired by the Interchurch inves-

tigation of the steel strike, determined to have a church investigation of this home-made war. With Mr. J. H. Causey as Chairman they enlisted the local Protestant ministers and then tried the innovation of enlisting the Catholic priests. They were most gratified to receive the heartiest cooperation which inspired them to invite the Jews to join them. This invitation likewise was accepted. The Social Service Commission of the Federal Council responded to an appeal for expert help by sending Dr. Edward T. Devine to Denver, and the national Catholic forces sent both Dr. John Ryan and Secretary Lapp of their Social Welfare Council. These men spent a month on the field and with the help of local forces and Delos Wilcox, the expert of tramways, made a thorough investigation. The results are somewhat surprising in the light of newspaper reports given out at the time. As soon as the completed report is available Prof. A. W. Taylor will give an analysis of it in *The Christian Century*. It will be interesting reading. There is hope for an end of industrial strife when the church begins to mediate.

Union in Relief Work

THERE are more millions of hungry people in the world this winter than ever before in the history of our country. Twenty millions in China reach out their hands to the world for bread. A tragedy is being enacted in central and eastern Europe whose horror few people realize. Hitherto a number of independent relief works have been carried on with the result that the public has been confused as to the merits of seemingly competitive organizations. The Christian world will hear with pleasure that eight relief organizations have been recently combined into one for greater efficiency. The best news of all is that Mr. Herbert Hoover has been secured to head up the new organization. Among the eight are the American Relief Administration, the Y. M. C. A., the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the Quakers and the Red Cross. It is hoped that \$33,000,000 may be spent this winter in works of mercy and relief. It is estimated that three and a half millions of children must be relieved at once if they are to live. Arrangements have been made to carry into such parts of Russia as can be reached \$100,000 worth of medical supplies which are urgently needed there in the battle with disease. This combination of relief agencies should enable Mr. Hoover to call upon the conscience of the American public with an authority equal to that of war-time. There are greater inhibitions to overcome now than then, but surely the American people will not fail in the greatest opportunity for service that has ever been presented to them.

A Special Minister to Labor

THE Methodist churches of Denver have made Rev. G. S. Lackland their special ambassador or minister to labor. He represents organized religion to the 18,000 members of labor unions in that city, and his ambassadorship is most warmly welcomed. Grace Church, well downtown, is his seat of action. To this fine old gothic edifice

has recently been added a \$60,000 Community House, in which there are thirty-two class and club rooms, which with the church and chapel gives the congregation four auditoriums, four parlors or club-rooms and a large gymnasium that can also be used for dinners, socials and entertainments. The whole plant provides admirably for worship and work, with ample accommodation for both social and educational religious activity. The most striking feature of Dr. Lackland's undertaking at present is the "Open Forum." The large auditorium is filled at 3 p. m. on Sundays, mainly by men and women who do not attend any church and who listen first to a speaker upon some vital issue and then question him and freely discuss his theme for a time equal to that used by him for presentation. Many well-to-do and regular church folk attend, though, as is usual, the more unconventional ideas prevail in the free-for-all discussion. Recently the pastor was attacked by the governor of the state because he publicly (not in his pulpit) supported the Farmer-Labor candidates who had captured the regular Democratic ticket. Organized labor, the ministry and many other organizations immediately gave him the heartiest support and he established the right to do for the more radical political and social viewpoint what ministers are usually able without criticism to do for conservatism and even for reactionism.

Who Killed Cock Robin?

IT would seem that the time has come for some one to speak a decently honest word for the late Interchurch World Movement. The Movement has passed out of existence. Its collapse has brought embarrassment and expense to the Protestant forces of America. The several denominations have had to go down into their missionary treasuries and dig up millions of dollars to pay their respective guarantees or, as in the case of the Presbyterians and Disciples, go to their churches asking for special contributions with which to meet their "debt of honor." This experience has been so unprecedented in our church history and so uninspiring even in its success that the natural impulse is to keep on kicking the corpse whose burial is proving so costly an affair. One enters hardly any gathering of churchmen nowadays but he hears some sarcastic or sullen remark thrown at the Interchurch. This probably is human nature's way, but it is both unreasonable and unfair.

Instead of this attitude of condemnation of the Interchurch Movement the Christian forces of the nation should be brought face to face with their own guilt in strangling the Movement by their sectarian selfishness, suspicion and arrogance. The Interchurch did not fall through any inherent weakness in its essential character. It fell through the lack of Christian grace in the denominations that were involved in it. In its original conception the Interchurch Movement was as practicable as it was noble. It proposed to unite American Protestantism in a single attack upon its common task. It conceived the task as one task and it assumed that the denominations

had reached at last a level of fraternity sufficiently catholic to permit them to work together in mutual trust for the Kingdom of God. The great survey was to be a united affair. The recruiting of young life for Christian service in the churches, the pulpits and the mission fields was to be a common and undivided undertaking. And the vast funds sought were to be raised by united effort and were to flow into a common treasury, to be later divided among the participating communions on a percentage basis agreed upon in advance. It was hoped—though this was no explicit part of the Interchurch program—that having gathered the funds by united effort they would, in considerable proportion, be administered unitedly.

This was the inspiring ideal with which the Interchurch World Movement was launched. It failed on the financial side only. The prodigious survey was proceeding with steadily widening scope and increasing precision of method. In three years there would have been put at the disposal of Christian statesmanship such a chart of the moral and spiritual conditions of the whole world as would enable the church to do its work with an intelligence not now dreamed of. The call for Christian workers was being sounded in the colleges and high schools, in the homes and churches of the land. Had there been time to follow this initial call with systematic encouragement over a space of two or three years there would have resulted a marvelous harvest of young life consecrated to the specific Christian professions. The financial department of the Movement, however, suffered constriction at the very beginning. Upon the Baptist and Presbyterian denominations must be laid the initial guilt of sectarianizing what had been conceived of from the beginning as a common treasury. These two bodies in their May, 1919, general assemblies—when the Interchurch was nearly six months old—set down the conditions under which they would allow their boards to participate in the Interchurch Movement. Among other conditions, some of which were equally unfraternal, they insisted that there should be no common treasury but that each denomination should make its own canvass in its own way for funds with which to fill its own treasury.

The effect of this action by two leading denominations without whose cooperation the Movement could not go forward at all, was radically to change the very genius and character of the undertaking. It reduced unity to mere simultaneity. It opened the way for suspicion and for a sort of ignoble jockeying for denominational advantage. It displaced the gracious sense of interdependence with the feeling of denominational self-sufficiency and competition. The publicity channels of each denomination were filled with mere denominational propaganda—Presbyterian New Era Movement, Baptist World Movement, Disciples World Movement, Congregational Forward Movement, etc., etc. To the popular mind in the several communions the Interchurch World Movement was a name only, the really important thing was the Movement of the particular denomination to which one happened to belong. Thus the glorious ideal with which

the Interchurch was originally endowed was vitiated and prostituted to the base partisanship of our sectarian system.

The denominations were not even willing to share from their treasuries the small percentage necessary to defray the expenses of the central organization. They compelled that organization to go outside the churches altogether—to the so-called "friendly citizens"—to find the funds with which to sustain the vast task of the survey and the recruiting and training of Christian workers. As it turned out there was "no such animal" as the "friendly citizen," and such as he was the denominational solicitors manifested no sensitive scruple against diverting his gift whenever possible to their own treasuries. This left the Interchurch treasury with only three million dollars where nine million was needed. And the Interchurch World Movement perished for the lack of six million dollars.

It hardly condones the guilt of the denominations to point to the fact that they gave their notes in advance for a total amount of about six million dollars. They gave those guarantees with not the slightest expectation that they would be called upon to pay them. Demanding the cream for themselves, they nevertheless assumed that the skimmed milk would certainly yield enough to sustain the central organization. And when it did not they ungracefully went about the hard necessity of making up the difference by paying their underwritings.

The Interchurch did not fail through any inherent weakness in its own idea, nor through extravagance in administration. There may have been, no doubt there was, considerable waste and indirection in the expenditures while so vast an undertaking was finding itself; but had the expenses been kept at one-half their actual figure the failure would have been no less inevitable. The blunt truth is that the Movement was robbed of its *raison d'être* by its constituent supporters. It was strangled to death by the un-Christian sectarianism that keeps on living in the bosom of our Protestant denominations.

Christmas Irritability

WE are all accustomed to the post-Christmas irritability to which children are subject, and which seems to be a logical result of late hours, candy and plum pudding. But the grown-ups feel the symptoms long before the holiday itself. Indeed, when Christmas day finally arrives it is welcome rather as a relief from strain than as an occasion inspiring joy.

For weeks before Christmas we wake up every morning with an oppressive feeling that there is somebody to whom we ought to give something, and that we have forgotten that somebody's name. We run from store to store, we endure sharp retorts from overworked and rebellious shop-girls, we stay up until absurd hours to construct gifts and to put up decorations, all because Christmas is in the air and we have been given to understand that we ought

to get very tired and cross about it. We have long since ceased to dream of surprising our friends with gifts. The utmost we hope for is that we may come up to their expectations.

For the hurry and extra work and mad confusion are not the deepest causes of Christmas irritability. The commercialism which is rampant at this season seeks to ally with itself the greed and vanity which are within us all. The Mater, egged on by the little demon which lurks in advertisements and show windows, hints for a fur coat. The flapper of the family boldly asserts her desire for a necklace. The big boy mumbles that it's mighty inconvenient not to have a watch, and the small boy shrieks his orders for an electric engine. Father, the object toward whom all of these remarks are plainly directed, finds himself growing more and more peevish under them, and yet wondering all the while if the Old Man down at the office won't add an extra twenty-five to his pay-check,—it's really due a fellow, at Christmas.

The truth is that we all know, so far as our weary minds are capable of knowing anything, that this anxiety and running about are unnecessary and meaningless. We are allowing "Christmas business," which is like any other enterprising business only more so, to dog our steps and to play upon our sentiment toward the great Christian festival and toward those we love. We all know very well that the manufacturers and dealers are united in an attempt to create a mob-consciousness concerning the day's approach and the obligations which it entails. It is this knowledge which is the most irritating part of our irritation. Mr. Barnum was only partly right in his opinion that the American people like to be humbugged. It took a genius of his type to do a really satisfactory job of humbugging. We do not like to be obliged continually to confess that we are being humbugged.

It is most fitting that we should keep Christmas, and keep it beautifully. It is most fitting that we should give gifts to those we love, and most of all, to those who have need. But Christmas is, first and best, a state of mind. The joy of it depends upon the independence and personal desire with which it is approached. Christmas irritability is a denial of Christmas reality.

The Sermon of the Little Child

A Christmas Parable of Safed the Sage

THERE was a day in Early Winter when the sun had set, and the daylight grew dim. And I entered the House of God. And there cometh ever upon me as I enter a feeling of Reverence and a sense of the Beauty of the place. For if the Sun be shining, then is the place flooded with Golden Light; and if it draw toward evening, then is the light less, but richer and more peaceful.

And I heard as I entered a Small Voice, and I beheld a Small Light. And they were Very Far Away, even in the Pulpit.

Now the Light was the Light of the Electric Lamp that

is fastened above the Pulpit. And it sheddeth its beams not toward the Congregation, but backward, and downward. For it is Hooded.

And Between the Top of the Pulpit and the Hood of the Light, I beheld a Little Face. And the Face was Rosy, and it was fringed round with Golden Hair. And the little round Mouth was open, and the Front Teeth were gone. And there stood the Daughter of the Daughter of Keturah. And she stood upon her Toes, that she might look in the face of the Congregation. And the Congregation sat on the Front Seat, very Attentively. For he was her Little Brother, whose age is Three. And he hath Great Admiration for his Sister, who hath late become Six.

And she held a Book in her Little Hands, and she sang. And he also sang. And when the song was finished, then did she climb up into My Great Chair and sit down.

And I also sat down, but far away, and I listened while they twain went through the Service. And the Daughter of the Daughter of Keturah was Grandpa, and her Little Brother was the Congregation. And at the end of each part of the service did she climb up into the Great Chair, and presently did she climb down again, and do the next thing.

And she came unto the Sermon. And she said,

Once upon a time there was a Cruel King. And he was not kind to the Little Jesus. And Joseph and Mary were kind to him. And they took him and went into Egypt. And Mary rode on a donkey and carried the Little Jesus in her arms, and Grandpa has a picture of it. And we must be kind to Jesus. When we see a little Kitten that Mews at the door, and has no mother, do we be kind to it? Yes, yes. And when we see a little Birdie, do we be kind to it? Yes, yes.

And when she said, Yes, yes, then did her brother also say, Yes, yes; for that was his Amen. And when she had finished, she clapped her hands and applauded her own sermon for ministers also do the same, though not so frankly. And her brother he also applauded.

And she said, Hullyhoo Root is here. Would he like to say a few words to the children?

Now I had not known that she had seen me, nor had she ever before called me Elihu Root; but as she was Grandpa, I had to be some one else. And she hath a long list of distinguished friends, whose names she useth very freely. And what I or Elihu Root said to the children mattereth not.

But this will I say for myself and for Elihu Root and for all men unto men and women everywhere—Be kind. For the miracle of Bethlehem is repeated wherever a child of God awaiteth a deed of love from any other child of God. In more than one place on earth hath there been an Inn with no room for the Christ. And when the Christmas Day cometh once again, give not alone to those who give unto you again, but be kind. When thou seest a Friendless child, and thou dost be kind unto him, hast thou done it unto Jesus. And if there be an home in need, and thou dost minister thereto in love, hast thou been kind to Him.

And the angels shall answer, Yes, yes.

At Tea With Tagore

By Joseph Fort Newton

“WHAT is wrong with the world? Why is it so upset and out of joint? What truth have we missed that we cannot set it right, cannot find a way out of the bog into which it has fallen? What can the great, deep mind of the East tell us for the healing of humanity?”

Questions such as these were in my mind as I went to a meeting with Rabindranath Tagore, the Hindu poet and seer, kindly arranged for me by a young man of India whom I had learned to know and love in London. There came back the scene from “The Talisman,” by Sir Walter Scott, telling how, a truce having been called, Richard and Saladin met and a test of skill was proposed. The big brawny man of the West with one blow cut a bar of iron in two, and the man from the East was amazed. Then Saladin, in his turn, drew a keen scimitar and in an instant, as with the twist of the wrist, laid open a pillow of down. King Richard was amazed at his dexterity. It was a parable of the East and the West, in their qualities of mind, and I wondered if they could ever really understand each other.

Kipling said no. East is East, he said, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet. But they have been meeting for ages. The Bible we read is a book of the East, and he whom we follow as the Master of Life wore a turban and a tunic. Time out of mind the thought of the East has been fertilizing the West, opening seeds of faith and beauty. The Light of Asia, even when seen through the stained glass of poetry, warms us strangely—touching our prosaic life with the glow of that eternal mysticism out of which the great religions were born. A common afflatus pervades the epigrams of Goethe, the oriental poetry of Hugo, the music of Verdi, and the essays of Emerson—the wandering brotherhood of the winds having brought a rich pollen from afar.

A GREAT SPIRITUAL PERSONALITY

It was in 1866 that Keshub Sen gave his great lecture, “Jesus Christ, Europe and Asia”; and three years later the same voice was heard in the question, “India Asks Who Is Christ?” The answer was that he is a prophet of the East, and that the men of the East may, perhaps, know and understand him better than we who live in the West. Four years later came that golden book, unique in our annals for its spiritual insight and beauty, “The Oriental Christ,” by Mazoomdar, afterwards the dear friend of David Swing, who described him as “a soul perfumed by the winds and flowers of heavenly places, a shadow of the early Christians who followed Jesus with shouts and palm branches.” Yes, Kipling was wrong; no one can compute the debt which the men of the West owe to the men of the East.

It was in the Algonquin Hotel, and the room in which I was received had a touch of eastern light and color, as if the poet had brought a bit of India to America. Standing beside the tea-table, he greeted me with a gentle, state-

ly simplicity of courtesy, friendly without being too formal, and we began talking of his various visits to our country—the first when his son was a student at the University of Illinois, the second when he came in the interest of his school, this being the third. As he talked his exquisitely soft voice was like music, and the impression of a great spiritual personality made an atmosphere in which one thought only of the highest things. His oriental robes, his dome-like forehead, his long iron-grey hair and beard, his beautiful dark eyes, made a picture of singular winsomeness, as if some figure had stepped out of the pages of the Bible.

As he talked on, speaking with the English accent—beginning a sentence in the treble key and sliding down—I remembered how when Yeats sought to find some one with whom to compare Tagore, he went back to Thomas a-Kempis. But a-Kempis was obsessed by the thought of sin, and Tagore seems to have as little thought of sin as a child. Say, rather, that he is a kind of blend of Walt Whitman and Francis of Assisi—a soul to whom the law and life of the world is love, comradeship, joy. My mind went back to my first reading of his poetry, in “Song Offerings,” and the enchantment of it—like floating, far off music, with a wistful elusive sadness, yet with touches to remind one of the Song of Songs, its imagery so tenuous at times, like filmy smoke-tapestry—and how, later, I had a happy argument with Alfred Noyes as to whether it is poetry at all or not. From these memories I was called sharply back by what he was saying about America:

“It is indeed strange,” he said. “When I walk the streets of your brilliant city, people look at me as if I were a man of another planet. I am a comic figure. They smile at me, curiously. What can it mean?”

“No, our people are not unfriendly,” I hastened to assure him. “Your oriental dress is odd and unfamiliar, and they look at you with the curiosity of provincials. They do not mean to be unkind. In London men of the East are often seen, but in New York it is not so. Your people do not come often enough.”

PICTURESQUENESS OF DIVERSITY

“But you will not let them come; you shut them out as despised Asiatics,” he replied. “They are ‘the scum of the earth’ to you, apparently. America does not want us. Our ancient culture, our old and sweet customs mean nothing to it. Our ways are wrong because they are different. America lacks respect for unlikeness, for otherness. Its democracy seeks to make all men alike, to run them into one mold, to rob them or shame them out of their picturesqueness of diversity. Americanization seems to mean that when all accept a certain formula it is enough; but old racial traits and cultural characteristics cannot be ironed out of humanity. Nor should they be. It is not a melting-pot that is needed, but a flower-garden, where each race may bloom and add its beauty to the common-wealth.”

"It is only too true," I admitted, for he had put his finger upon the absurdity of regimented democracy which seeks equality at the expense of liberty. "But America is young, as the lives of peoples go, and we have much to learn. Our faults are the faults of youth, and may be overcome. To go from America to England, for example, is like leaving a foot-ball team to attend a faculty meeting. America needs India, and, if I may say so, perhaps India needs America."

"Ah, it is well said," he agreed, emphasizing his approval with a graceful bow of the head; "it is good to hear you say it. So few men of the West think that India has anything to give to the world—forgetting our high philosophy and our rich literature and our treasure of song. They come to us for what they can get, not for what we can give—seeking to exploit us, not to understand us. They are not comrades, but conquerors. They think we are inferior to them because we are unlike them: Our culture is ignored in their universities—they do not know us, lacking the sympathetic insight needed to see a different point of view."

There was a hint of pathos in his tone, and I reflected that he spoke as a poet commanding the largest audience ever won by any poet in the world. From end to end of India his songs are sung, especially his songs breathing a passionate love and praise of his motherland.

A MISUNDERSTANDING WORLD

"What is wrong with the world that we misunderstand each other so sadly? Why have we gotten so snarled and twisted and seem to see no way out? After all, we are brothers made to share the large innocence of nature and the unfailing love of God. Why have we gone so far astray?" I asked, thinking to lead up to other matters that I had in mind.

"The world does not know the truth," he said simply. "It has no common idea about which its life may unite and cohere. It has forgotten, if it ever discovered, that down below race, rank, religion there is a fundamental humanity—man as man—which is universal and everywhere the same. I am a man of India as to my origin, training, and outlook; but I am something else—I am a human being, a man of humanity. I have learned that, though our tongues are different and our habits are dissimilar, at bottom our hearts are one. The clouds, generated on the banks of the Nile, fertilize the distant shores of the Ganges. East is East and West is West—God forbid that it should be otherwise—but the twain must meet in amity, peace, and mutual understanding. Their meeting will be all the more fruitful because of their differences. Humanity will be perfect only when diverse races and nations shall be free to evolve their distinct characteristics, while all are attached to the stem of humanity by the bond of love. I do not think in terms of nationality, but in terms of humanity."

"Not even in terms of Indian nationalism?" I ventured to ask, interrupting. "You do not support the nationalist movement of India, rumors of which we hear from time to time?"

"Yes, even Indian nationalism; I am beyond all that.

We need a new vocabulary as well as a new mind in the world. I am as much at home in America—if you will allow me to be—as I am in India. Besides, India is not a nation; it is many nations, many races. It has an appearance of unity only because it must seem to stand together against the dominance of big empires. All imperialism—except the imperialism of love—is wrong. It brings little nations and various races together, like chips in a basket, but they do not unite; they are simply held together. There is no bond of union."

A LEAGUE OF ROBBERS

"Will not the League of Nations tend to bring men and nations together in a different spirit and upon a better basis?" I inquired, little dreaming what the answer would be.

"No, no," he cried, with more force and fire than at any moment before. "It is a League of Robbers. It is a failure because it is founded on force. It does not really care for small nations, except as pawns in the old game of dicker and grab. It has no spiritual foundation. The time is not ripe. Humanity is not ready for it. A new machine is of little advantage if it be run by the old power and for the old ends. Organization is not brotherhood, and God cares more for a brother than He does for an empire. The great war was one of the blows of God seeking to break down our materialism, our selfishness, our narrow nationalisms. It made a dent, but only a dent, in the crust. Other blows will fall betimes. Until we learn to live together by the real law of our nature—the Law of Love—a veil will hide the beauty and wonder of the world, leaving us to wander alone or struggle together in confusion and strife."

"In short," I interjected, "what we need is the law of love, as Jesus taught it, and the vision of the Kingdom of Heaven as it shone in his mind."

"Yes, Jesus was right," and he spoke the great name with evident love and reverence; "and he was a man of the East. His words are not simply whiffs of fragrance—they are indeed poetry, but poetry believed in—but also great laws of life and truth; as much so as the laws of chemistry. But you do not believe in Jesus. If you did, America would be happy, and joy and laughter would walk the common ways of men. But America is not happy. It seeks pleasure, but it does not find joy. God is wanting—"

THE LOVE OF GOD

Of a sudden a light came into his face, as if he saw a vision, and he talked—more to himself than to me—about the love of God. I shall never forget it. The rush and roar of New York was hushed, and the room became a sanctuary. In this far country his mind had found its native land of the spirit. I might have been listening on the hillsides of Galilee, or beside the sea, while Jesus taught. I dare not try to reproduce his words. They were simple words, but they had such radiance of reality as I have never seen or felt before. I felt the everywhere-ness of God and His all-encompassing goodness. It was like a revelation. I shall never bow in prayer again without

thinking of that moment, and how real, how lovely, how ineffably near God was. "May he grant us the beneficent mind," he said, softly, quoting from the Upanishad, and neither of us spoke for a spell.

"How can we make this vision real to men?" I asked, reluctantly breaking a silence that was sacred. "The more lovely it is the more one feels impelled to seek some method whereby to communicate it to others."

"It will triumph," he said "because it is true and beautiful. In every land where I go—especially on this journey, which has taken me to France and Belgium before coming to America—I find numbers of men who seek the truth and are yearning for its realization. They are outcasts, for the most part, vagabonds, poets,—as Jesus was in His day. But they are witnesses of the truth, keepers of the soul of humanity. What we need is a League of Vagabonds so to name it, some kind of fellowship between these men of God whom one finds in the most unexpected places. Yet everywhere they recognize one another, as if they had some password between them. They have the secret for the healing of the world. They know God who is known not by words, but by love, by joy."

CONSCRIPTS OF TRUTH

Continuing, he said that such a conception might seem, at first, visionary in our practical America; the mere fancy of a poet. But it is not. Once, by the mercy of God, a truth is born into the world, it can never be expelled. Nor can it be defeated. All who see it are thereafter conscripts in its service. We must have faith in truths, in ideas, in the finer forces that work quietly, as seeds grow, and never

tire, never sleep. At the same time, we must use all means within our power to realize our ideals in practical life.

"That is one thing that brings me to America, to know your people, to see your vast, uprising young nations, and to divine, if it may be, what its spirit is. Hereafter my life and all that I have—which is only a little—is to be devoted to establishing first in India, and then elsewhere, if possible, a university in which the better minds of all races, to whom we must look for leadership, may mingle, and the culture of the East and the culture of the West may be united in fellowship. It is men of world-mind that we need, men of the spirit—who see that we are all citizens in the Kingdom of Ideas. In this way, long after I am gone, when in the purpose of God the time does come for a real League of Humanity, there will be men large enough to see the human scene as a whole, who understand that the good of humanity as a family actually exists, and we shall not suffer such a bankruptcy of constructive faith and vision as we have in our day."

Such, imperfectly reported, and lacking the art to reproduce the atmosphere of a noble and stimulating personality, was my talk over the tea-cups with Tagore. My feeling, as we parted, was that I had met one of the most remarkable men, and surely the greatest lover of God, it has ever been my joy to know. If the things of which he talked, as I report them, seem vague, it is to be remembered that they are no more to be uttered than the ecstasy of spring mornings or the light that lies on purple hills. But it is to that open window of spiritual vision that we must look for real guidance, and it is the poet-prophet who must lead in the way and will of God.

Our Creed and Our Children

By Raymond M. Alden

ONE of the characteristics of our time, says the clever Mr. Chesterton in one of his essays, is our disposition to shrink from the responsibility of handing on to our children the tradition we received from our fathers. "That," he says, "is the one eternal education: to be sure enough that something is true that you dare to tell it to a child. From this high audacious duty the moderns are fleeing on every side."

Like every thoughtful man, I have for a long time observed with interest the fact emphasized by Mr. Chesterton, that a considerable number of the men of my acquaintance are in the habit of shirking the problem of giving definite religious instruction to the children for whose existence they are responsible. In most cases they have ceased to believe some things which were taught them in childhood. They have not, however, ceased to regard a belief in these things as somehow desirable for childhood. The result is an embarrassment akin to that frequently discussed regarding the rights of children and the truth about Santa Claus, but far more serious and lasting.

Some of my acquaintances meet—or avoid—the difficulty by adopting either of two extreme measures. One of these

is to decide that no religious instruction shall be given their children, either by themselves or anyone else, on the ground that to do so is in some way to inhibit that free judgment, or choice of belief, which they feel is the sacred right of every individual human soul. At the other side is the decision of some to commit the religious instruction of their children entirely to the church. This may be either because they feel that it is the prerogative of the church to speak with authority, or, because, in the absence of any such rightful authority, it seems safest to accept for the time being the most generally respected of available substitutes.

IMPOSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES

For my own part, both alternatives are impossible. There is no need to re-state here the well-known argument of Professor William James, to the effect that to omit a choice of religious faith is to make one—that this is a case of a "forced option." Unless, therefore, one's own belief is clear that no religious faith is possible, it is a terrible risk to teach this implicitly, by silence. And as to committing the teaching to an authoritative church, my difficulty

is no smaller, since I am not a believer in a really authoritative church, before whose voice my own thinking must grow silent. To ask that my children shall be taught something which I myself am unwilling to affirm, when, with the daily growth of their intelligence, they more and more frequently look into my eyes and seek clear-sighted guidance,—this is the rankest mockery.

Being, then, of those who find a creed possible, but for whom the creed must be won by individual conquest, rather than by mere acceptance from tradition or authority, what shall I do with this creed for the minds of my children?

PARENTS' TEACHING TESTED IN EXPERIENCE

This question has certain aspects which are due to my individual experience in passing from a child's religion to a man's. I was trained by parents who believed, in general, in the creed represented by the Westminster Catechism, and had themselves been taught to repeat and accept that catechism. But they also believed that it was overelaborate and none too well proportioned for children's use; so they did not ask me to learn it, but sent me instead to the Bible texts on which it was professedly based, and had me learn these instead. For this I shall always be grateful. They also selected from their creed those doctrines which they considered essential to the religious life, as distinguished from those concerned with a system of thought, and taught me these with the authority of their own belief, bidding me put them to the test as I had opportunity, and assuring me that as I grew older they would bear whatever tests time might apply.

Again, looking back, I think their method right. As I gradually came to form my own creed out of that thus learned, it happened that in most cases the word of my parents was fulfilled: their doctrines stood the tests of time. In other cases I was obliged to modify or to reject, for myself, what they had taught me, either because of evidence which might be called new or because I valued certain kinds of evidence differently, or measured spiritual things in somewhat different proportions, from them. Some of these modifications or rejections caused me difficult, even painful, moments; and if my parents had, like many good men and women, loaded their teaching with a crowd of lesser doctrines, viewing as essentials what I believe to be non-essentials, these difficult times would have been much more numerous than they were.

BELIEFS THAT WILL GROW

To some extent this kind of experience is no doubt a normal and healthy part of the mental and spiritual growth of youth, and is not a thing to be lamented. Yet we all know that in many cases it is experienced in such a violent form that religious faith as a whole is lost because the essentials and the non-essentials have grown together in the mind so that one cannot be torn up without eradicating all. For this reason I particularly desire, while following with my children a method similar to that pursued with my own childhood, to teach them as little as possible which it may be their destiny to unlearn, and to make their religious instruction consist of vital beliefs which are cap-

able of growing, modifying their form, and thriving independently of the conditions under which they took root.

When I look back, as I have just been doing, over the experience of maturing and changing belief, I do not find the conditions very different in the religious field from those discoverable in others,—for instance, in the field which we call "science." For those persons who think of natural science as made up of fixed truths, unmistakably known, and of theology as made up of vaguely profitable guesses, the analogy of course will not hold. But to my mind both science and theology seem to be pretty rapidly changing attempts, through the successive efforts of our poor human apprehension, to state what is in itself presumably unchanging. A very large part of what was taught me about natural facts, as a child, I find holding good to-day. Efforts to avoid accidents through some practical knowledge of the law of gravitation are quite the same. The general principles concerning the question what shall I eat, and when, have not much altered, though our knowledge of foods and of digestion has of course made progress. In other cases I note a marked difference; for example, whereas I was taught to avoid draughts of air, I teach my children to get into them wherever possible in our badly ventilated in-door world. And it is much the same in matters of religious faith. I cannot see that the fact of sin is very different to-day from what it used to be, despite the countless theories regarding it which have come and gone. In quite the same way

I know that right is right,
That it is not good to lie,
That love is better than spite,
And a neighbor than a spy: . . .
That rulers must obey,
That givers shall increase,
That Duty lights the way
For the beautiful feet of peace.

My father knew all this, and taught it to me. On the other hand, while he taught me also what is "the first and great commandment," together with the second which is like unto it, I can readily see that these two loom much larger in the theology of my day than they did in that of his. He was taught a catechism which actually dared to define the word "God" with the word "love" left out, though room was found for eight lesser terms; and this he corrected, as Christendom generally has corrected it, from his immediate knowledge of God, the Bible, and his own heart. Other and less important matters, such as the definitions of Bible and Church, have suffered still more of wear and change, and are still in a more uncertain state. For my children, then, I repeat, I want definitions which will represent all that I now believe I know, and at the same time will have within themselves the capacity to mean more than I now know, when truth is known better after I am gone.

VALUE OF A CATECHISM

Reasoning along these lines, I have come to think—what I once doubted—that the old idea of a catechism is a lastingly good one. Children are great askers of questions, and must have answers. They remember these ans-

THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY

wers whether we will or no, and turn them over in their minds. As they grow older they find more and more in them, if it is there to find. If this is true of lesser matters, it is true also of the greatest things with which our ignorance and our knowledge are concerned. The plan, then, of a definite catechism, made to meet reasonable questions near the child's level, yet far enough above it to keep his apprehension climbing, is sound and wholesome. But I have not yet found the published catechism which I can undertake to teach my children. The venerable "Shorter" I could not for a moment attempt to rival, either for intellectual depth or rhetorical form; but it contains too much which neither I nor—I venture to think—any other man can undertake to affirm. I do not wish to ask my child to learn a statement of which I must say, if asked, "The real truth about that we neither know nor need to know."

A CHILD'S CREED

Other things in this and other traditional catechisms I frankly disbelieve. I do not disbelieve them with the same self-satisfaction which many of my contemporaries seem to find in doing so; I hold it no virtue, nor sign of cleverness, that I cannot affirm certain things which have been held as beliefs by many better men than I, and I hope in time to believe more of such things than I do now. But for the time being, what I do not believe I cannot teach. And after all—to return to the point from which we started—it is I that must teach my child. While he is a child, I cannot say to him, "This was affirmed by the Council of Nice, but denied by the Westminster Assembly; keep an open mind regarding it, till you have studied philosophy;" any more than I can say to him, when he asks me whether this or that is good for food, "Some say it is, others the contrary; time and physiology will decide." No, for it is of matters of present moment that we are thinking. Is God here? in what relation to me? how to be pleased? if displeased, how to be reconciled? Is any kind of conduct right or wrong? Is there anything which we do not see, yet in reference to which we can act or live? These are things which, though he could not so phrase them, even the child must know, if I know anything of them, to live his present life to the full.

If I had no religious beliefs at all,—if, so far as I could see, there were nothing to concern us beyond flesh and blood and earth,—I confess I should not know how to treat the child. When to reveal to him the awful emptiness of the universe,—how long to let him play among the phantom illusions, the trailing clouds of glory, with which he came,—this would be a hard question. There are hours when I think that, if there were no undiscovered country, we should all be justified in cherishing the notion of it as long as possible, and other hours when I say, No—the truth is always best. But this is not to the present purpose, for I am not now writing for those without belief. The question now is what we shall do who have a creed, though it may be slight and short as compared with the "creeds of Christendom." And what I have done, as the result of the line of thought which has here been outlined, is to write a catechism of my own. It is brief enough to be submitted at once, in further explanation of what I have said, if only

it be understood that it is for this purpose that I set it down, and not as an achievement or a model.

1. Who is God?

God is my Father in heaven, and the Father of all men, women, and children everywhere.

2. What is God like?

He is an infinite Spirit, perfect in power, wisdom, and love, who made all things and lives in all things.

3. Who is Jesus?

Jesus is God's oldest Son, like Him and like us, who lived and died as a man to show all men that God loves them and to save them from their sins.

4. What is sin?

Sin is whatever I do that displeases my Father in heaven, or leave undone that He wishes me to do.

5. How may I know what God wishes me to do?

In three ways: by reading about Him in the Bible, by hearing Him speak to me in my conscience, and by learning what good men think is right and wrong.

6. What does God chiefly wish me to do?

To become like Jesus, in being loving and obedient to my Father in heaven, and loving and helpful to every man.

7. What can I do when I have sinned?

Three things: ask God to forgive me for Jesus' sake, undo the wrong as far as possible, and resolve to do right on the next occasion.

8. What is a Christian?

A Christian is one who trusts Jesus to teach the truth about God, to show how to live, and to save from sin and death.

9. What is the Bible?

The Bible is the book, made up of many books, which gives the record of God's making himself known to man in many ways, especially in the life and words of Jesus.

10. Where is Heaven?

Heaven is wherever God is perfectly loved and obeyed, and where those who love Him live when their bodies have been taken away by death.

A word or two might be added in comment on what I have tried to accomplish in formulating this catechism for my children. In the first place, it is due to a desire to base its teaching on religious tradition. Because I do not believe all that is in the traditional creeds, nor accept as authoritative the voice of any church, it does not follow that I wish to construct my creed *de novo*, as if no one had lived or thought before me. I do not know why some who are glad to learn from their fathers in almost every other matter are almost disposed to reject an article of faith if it has been generally held by an earlier generation. The historic faith of Christendom, the faith of my fathers, I wish to hand on to my children just so far as I can view it as being kept in its purity, unmixed with accretions which we may seek to distinguish and put aside. The great things in this faith, from my standpoint, have stood every test that time can bring.

TRUTH ENOUGH FOR CHILDHOOD

Secondly, for reasons already in part explained, I have sought to make my children's creed as short as possible. This is not merely for ease in learning, but that it may be limited to what the pragmatists call, I believe, truth that works. Religious teaching cannot, any more than any other, go much further, and keep its vitality, than there is corresponding matter to meet it in the mind and life of the

taught. For example here, take the doctrine of the Trinity. For this doctrine I have profound reverence, as one of the deepest and most daring efforts to express ultimate realities ever made by man. But even for the religious life of my maturity—much more for that of my childhood—it has had little pragmatic vitality. If one's experience has been otherwise, he should no doubt make a place in his creed for a more explicit statement of it than that for which I have need.

Notwithstanding this aim toward brevity, I have wished my catechism—this also has been already hinted—to contain matter which for the child will have a little meaning now, but much more hereafter. An example of this is the statement that God "lives in all things." Now the immanence of God can mean very little, I take it, in childish days, beyond the mere notion of omnipresence at best. But it may not be altogether useless, as keeping the learner from the old heresy of cutting out God from certain parts of the world; and some day, if I read the trend of present thought aright, it may take on profound significance, linking itself with the growing sense that, wherever one touches any of the forces of the universe, there he meets the infinite Force which gives it unity. Another example is what might be called the doctrine of the atonement. To state this in any special or definite form is not only—for me—too difficult but undesirable. One reason, surely, why so many have come to deny it altogether is the fact that it was taught them in a form which they cannot now hold, and the form and the essence have been discarded together. What the atonement will mean to my child, one day, I cannot guess—perhaps very different from what it means to me. All which I now seek to certify to him is the elemental affirmation, which I see no sign that the future of Christianity is to lay aside any more than its past, that for sin there is a means of salvation.

THE IDEA OF SIN

It is in its emphasis on this fact of sin that my little creed will seem, to some, especially old-fashioned. Some of my friends, quite as religious as I, do not believe in sin at all, and some others, while not prepared to deny it, think it a kind of negative truth, happily forgettable, which should not be emphasized for the child. They are doubtless the happier for this. For myself I can only say that, while by no means following my Puritan ancestors in all their teaching concerning the nature of sin, or the remedy for it, I am quite unconvinced that they made any error in giving to it the place they did in the problem of religion. So it must have a place in my catechism as an integral part, even for childhood, of a creed that *works*. On the other hand I make no place for theories as to its cause. Some will miss the devil from my statements, and those who know him well enough (there is no flippancy or irony here) should perhaps include him. I find his being and nature too uncertain, whether in the original documents of Christianity or its working theology of today, to trouble the child with any more of him than will be learned without my aid.

Finally, it may be noticed that for some readers my statement regarding the Bible will seem seriously defec-

tive in claiming no more for the book than I have made it do. Just here, no doubt, there is more difference than anywhere else between the Christian teaching of our generation and its predecessors; and a world of doubts, of honest pain, of warfare and of reconstruction of thought, has gone into the change, as we all know. How much Christendom is now ready to affirm respecting the Bible I do not feel competent to say. Whoever is certain of more than I have said, with a certainty which he is willing to pit against whatever learning his child will eventually acquire, should of course put it into his creed. But I am concerned, as I have shown, to be careful not to say so much that my child will hereafter have to discard my statement, and feel that perhaps all the rest of the little creed was dependent on this article, and has therefore been lost with it. The problem is a hard one; the answer probably needs revision more than any of the others; but I am resolved to face the question squarely, how to instil the fitting reverence for the sacred and priceless book, and at the same time insure that reverence against unnecessary loss from discoveries or opinions which lie outside the region of its permanent values.

These, then, are the principles on which I have based my catechism. I hope very earnestly that in discussing them I may not have seemed to be contending for the creedal statements themselves, when my only purpose has been to make clear the aims I have had in formulating them. Certainly no reader will make the mistake of thinking that I have urged them as something for others to use; for the very point of my discussion has been that this is my catechism—what I have to teach my child because it is what I am now willing to affirm to him, interpret to him, and share with him, until—whether together, if God will, or by separate paths—we have at length won to a better creed.

Four Walls

THE four walls I had always known,
Grew close like prison bars;
I levelled them that I might live
Unbound save by the stars.

I levelled them with strong, glad strokes;
I worked untiringly,
As one who hews through virgin woods,
A vista toward the sea.

And when at last the walls lay low,
And earth and sea and sky
Were all that compassed me about,
Wild winds came rushing by.

In fear I hunted for the stones,
To build my wall again;
But they were gone and mockingly,
Down poured the cold gray rain.

—Contemporary Verse.

What Convinced the Physicists?

THE things that convinced the great physicists of the reality of psychic phenomena may not convince us, but the fact that they are convinced gives us pause and makes it impossible for the open minded to scoff. This field of scientific investigation is so new and its results so startling, that it will be best for the truth itself if we approach the phenomena with a genuine admixture of scepticism. The great physicists welcome scepticism and advise all to maintain that attitude until convinced by proof that will make unbelief impossible. The actual scientific experimentors may themselves be convinced, and yet be unable to convince others. Proof of anything so revolutionary should be accepted only when it is made indubitable, and when it is liable to be confused with elements so mixed with delusion and fraud as is popular spiritualism there is all the more reason for balancing the open mind with a certain reserve of scepticism.

* * *

What Convinced Sir William Crooks

Sir William Crooks, inventor of the Crooks Tube, began his investigations convinced that the phenomena of spiritism were all fraud and trickery and that he could expose them. He ended, as he says, by "staking his scientific reputation" on the actual post mortem existence of the soul, after applying the same exact and scientific tests to his experiments that he had applied in the case of purely physical experimentation. He confessed to an antagonism between his reason and all his preconceptions on the one hand and the evidence which he found it impossible to deny. His final conviction was based wholly upon experiments conducted by himself, in his own house or laboratory, in full light, under conditions of his own choosing and with personal verification by friends of his own choosing. He never had anything to do with spiritualism as a religion. Here are some of the things that convinced him after years of experimentation and verification. The movement of material bodies without contact; the alteration of the weight of material bodies; percussive sounds caused by an invisible power and the playing of musical instruments in the same manner; intelligent messages written by unseen hands, not on closed slates but in the open and under his own eyes in full light; the materialization of phantom forms which he repeatedly photographed himself under a full arc light in his own house with all doors and windows locked with his own hands. This last phenomenon brought conviction regarding the reality and historicity of the appearance of Jesus after death and burial.

* * *

What Convinced Sir William Barrett

Of the many books written in recent years upon this subject, Sir William Barrett's "On the Threshold of the Unseen" is perhaps the clearest exposition for the sceptic. His experiments were carried on for forty years and with the same scientific care and acumen that won him knighthood as a physicist. In this volume he does no speculating or philosophizing until the last two chapters where he permits himself to attempt some speculative conclusions based upon the findings which had so utterly convinced himself and other scientific experimentors. Only a few of the considerations which he recounts in this fascinating volume as having wrought conviction can here be given. Among them are: Direct spirit writing on an open slate, in his own presence, in full daylight, under conditions that made fraud seem utterly impossible; production of a luminosity in a dark room arranged by himself and under conditions that defied fraud; what he calls indubitable evidence of "apparitions" or the appearance of the dead; ex-

periments in telepathy that defy all the usual explanations and that point to it as the means used by discarnate intelligences in communicating with human beings; undeniable tests in "automatic writing," from hands of two children who died before learning writing; communications in which the rationality displayed by the "spirit" could be analytically differentiated from that of the medium beyond any doubt. Sir William has never found himself to possess any peculiar "psychic" powers, but, on the contrary, his presence often made operations difficult. His convictions come quite as much from the experiments of others, whom he has studied, as from his own.

* * *

Sir Oliver Lodge and "Raymond"

Sir Oliver Lodge, one of the world's foremost scientists and educators, has brought to his experiments in the psychic realm the same precision as he has given to experimentation in the realm of physics. It is difficult to deny the reality and convincing nature of one while accepting those of the other. Sir Oliver was not convinced by "Raymond"; he had been convinced by independent experiment covering many years before Raymond was killed and had recorded it in his "Survival of Man." He had said "knowledge can never grow until it is realized that the question, 'Do you believe in these things?' is puerile unless it has been preceded by the enquiry, 'What do you know about them?'" The sceptics in his family were finally convinced by the Raymond communications, but he had himself long been convinced and it was the great consolation brought to him and his family by the Raymond communications that determined him to give the world the book, braving "criticism and scorn" in the hope that others would find like consolation. The same type of experiment had overthrown Sir Oliver's scepticism as has here been recounted in the cases of others. He was never a spiritualist nor has he ever taken part in spiritualistic seances, but for a long time he has been a "spiritualist" as contrasted with a "materialist." The "revelations" in "Raymond" seem baffling to many of his readers, though many of them are simple, direct and, to many readers, convincing. The famous example of the photograph which was fully described before anyone in England knew of its existence, is well known to many who have not even read the book.

* * *

The Remarkable Experiments of Professor William J. Crawford

Professor Crawford has for many years been lecturer in Mechanical Engineering at the University and Technical School of Belfast. A thorough sceptic, he began some years ago a series of experiments in the mechanical testing of psychic phenomena. He enlisted the co-operation of a devout family one of whose daughters possesses marked mediumistic powers, but who never uses them professionally or for profit nor ever gives public seances. She has cooperated in every way, as has her family, in meeting every requirement of his experiments. They have been conducted within the sanctities of the family home, in his own attic chamber and in his laboratory, and always under conditions of his own making with every need of the experiment explicitly met. In two volumes Professor Crawford gives an account of these many experiments covering a period of seven years. They are recorded in the same manner and wrought out with the same meticulous precision that he gives to the results of his mechanical experimentation. The titles of the books are "The Reality of Psychic Phenomena" and "Experiments in Psychical Science." The phenomenon experimented with was chiefly that of levitating

tables, though other types of phenomena were examined. All work was done in sufficient light to guarantee exact observation and Dr. Crawford has become convinced not only of the psychical character of levitation but of the assured presence and help of discarnate spirits and of having received well verified messages from them. He found that the weight of the medium increased as the table was lifted, a little less than the weight of the table being always added to her weight, the

remainder being added to others in the circle. Instruments of precision were always used in the tests and bells were rung, messages knocked out, phonographic records made of the same, substantial impressions made on wax by invisible forms which are photographed and reproduced in the books. Space forbids a complete account. Many will find here ample proof of levitation without following the author's conclusions regarding spirit accompaniment.

ALVA W. TAYLOR.

CORRESPONDENCE

Parish Ethics

EDITOR THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY:

SIR: The medical fraternity has often been criticised for making too much of "professional ethics" and for overstraining the doctrine of "professional courtesy." But no other profession has so long and honorable a record for the observance of professional proprieties as that of medicine, and it might be profitable if the ministry would study this record and emulate its virtues.

We might ask with propriety, whether or not there has ever been a definite code of professional ethics recognized by ministers in general? In the light of twenty years of observation and investigation I am inclined to say that if there has been such a code, it has been obscure and capable of many interpretations.

Again, no ethical physician ever calls professionally upon the patient of another without an invitation from the physician in charge, and then only when said physician is present for consultation. But there are many ministers who have no hesitancy in going into the home of members of other churches, and proceeding uninvited to inform the patient that their present spiritual physician is not capable of properly diagnosing their case, and would not properly prescribe, even if he knew the real character of their trouble.

Any physician who would invade the recognized territory of another practitioner and solicit patronage therefrom, would be called to account for this action before a committee of his medical society. Recently one of our state secretaries of a woman's society, who lives in a large city, was asked as to the congregation with which she held membership. Her reply revealed the fact that she lived three miles from the church building in which she worshipped, and that there was another church of her own communion within two blocks of her residence. When asked why she was doing this peculiar thing her answer was: "Dr. A. just implored me so strongly to come to his church, I could not refuse." Now if "Dr. A." were an M. D. he would probably be excluded from his society for unethical practice. As a minister he is given credit for being "such a good pastor and faithful visitor." Is it good Christian ethics to comb a great city, bleed small and weak congregations to death, and discourage struggling ministers in order to keep another church roll up to twenty-five hundred or three thousand? The physician takes blood from the "strong" to infuse into the weak; ministers often reverse the process by taking the blood of the weak to make the strong stronger. It requires a long stretch of the imagination to see any Christian ethics in this practice, or to justify it on any ground, except purely selfish grounds.

Then there is the "former field of labor" which is sometimes invaded without proper regard for the feelings of our successors. In some instances these visits are prearranged by suggesting to the young folk that we will be glad to return when they are in need of some one to perform a marriage ceremony; or we drop in on a Sunday morning without first informing the minister of our intended visit, and having an understanding with him, to the effect, that we must in no way disturb his regular program of service.

Might it not be possible for ministers to develop a code of consideration that would prevent friction, and eliminate criticisms that often wound our fellow laborers, and lower us just a bit in the eyes of the men and women of the community, who have their finer sensibilities normally developed? Suppose our seminaries establish a "Chair of Parish Ethics."

Carthage, Mo.

L. J. MARSHALL.

For Irish Independence

EDITOR THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY:

SIR: As a reader and lover of The Christian Century I was surprised and shocked to find in your editorial entitled "Hyphenates Would Embroil Us" so much indignation over a little breach of the peace of New York sympathizers of a man who laid down his life for his friends. These churchmen were out of order, but "Why so hot, my little man?" Why not save your indignation for the negroes we Americans burn in the South every year? Or the British Parliament which refused to appoint the same committee of great men to investigate the atrocities in Ireland, which they appointed to investigate the atrocities that Germany committed in Belgium? Or our slaughtering in Haiti which is more than stoning a foreign flag in the United States.

How can The Christian Century follow its soul in preaching a stone image impartiality for Americans, when the British fire on helpless people in retaliation, the same British who were indignant when the Germans followed the same method? The "Century" tries to catch every accent of the Holy Ghost, and it stands for the coming religion, the kingdom of God to be incarnated on earth as it is in heaven.

Such is the motive of the movement for Irish freedom. Secular antagonism is cleverly pleaded by England, and in the reaction of the war, we are apt to worship the God of things as they are. Let the average newspaper which has little soul do this, but the "Century" cannot become an apologist for an empire that denies rights to a people within its borders. Because a burglar has camped in my house for a hundred years

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REV. EMIL E. BAUM.

Cincinnati, O.

he has no more right to stay there than if he had broken in last night. So with England in Ireland, with the hoodlums of the Black and Tan. She has no ethical rights that we should approve.

The Irish people have asked for freedom. It is a poor kind of American that does not sympathize with their legitimate aspirations for the same freedom which we won.

CONSTITUENCIES

| | |
|------------------------------------------------|-----|
| For Irish Republic and Self-Determination..... | 79 |
| (Sinn Fein, 73; Nationalists, 6) | |
| For Status Quo (Unionist Party) | 26 |
| Total | 105 |

VOTES CAST

| | |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| For Irish Republic and Self-Determination..... | 1,207,151 |
| (Sinn Fein, 971,945; Nationalists, 235,206) | |
| For Status Quo (Unionist Party)..... | 308,713 |
| Total | 1,515,864 |

Can any thinking country today show such a unanimity on important questions?

Of every 3 voters 2 voted for Irish Republic.

Of every 5 voters 4 voted for Self-Determination.

Only 1 voter in 5 voted for English Rule.

From the newer vision of God we know that Ireland should be as dear and holy to Irishmen as the Holy Land is to the Jews. In our services next Sunday we read of patriotism of the Jews with long faces, and on Monday the great banking interests make us sneer at the poor paddy in Erin. And surely that is enough to make God laugh!

I come from an old American family which has contributed its share from the Continental army under General Washington to the recent great World War. Perhaps that is one reason why I am old fashioned enough to call your attention to the following exhortation from Mount Vernon in 1788 which I dare you to print in *The Christian Century*.

"Patriots of Ireland! Champions of liberty in all lands! Be strong in hope! Your cause is identical with mine. You are calumniated in your day; I was misrepresented by the loyalists of my day; had I failed, the scaffold would be my doom; but now my enemies pay me honor. Had I failed I would have deserved the same honor. I stood true, to my cause, even when victory had fled; in that I merited success. You must act likewise."

Conneaut, Ohio.

CARLYLE SUMMERBELL.

Contributors to This Issue

RAYMOND M. ALDEN, Litt.D., professor of literature in Leland Stanford University.

JOSEPH FORT NEWTON, frequent contributor to the *Christian Century*.

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NEWS OF THE CHRISTIAN WORLD

A Department of Interdenominational Acquaintance

Baptist Missionaries Tired of Theological Controversy

The theological controversy in a number of the evangelical communions are proving a discouragement in missionary work. In Disciples circles, there are frequent reports of volunteers who will not accept appointment because of the spirit of suspicion that is kept alive by conservative journalism. The Baptist expresses an editorial opinion on this subject indicating the urgency of the problem among the Baptists. It says: "Letters received from the foreign field make it clear that many missionaries are not a little troubled because of the controversies going on at home. Somehow they seem unable to share the expectation of those who see in theological warfare a far-reaching good for the kingdom of God. Face to face with an appalling need, handicapped by inadequate equipment, overworked because of the lack of helpers, they entreat us not to make their work more difficult. While we are trying to settle vexed questions, let us increase our beneficiaries. Otherwise our representatives in lonely out-stations will grow sick at heart and utterly discouraged."

Thinks Methodism Will Not Soon Be United

Dr. Rembert G. Smith, writing in the Christian Advocate, a southern Methodist organ, published at Nashville, Tenn., expresses pretty vigorously the opinion that the union of the two larger Methodisms will not occur in the near future. His remarks in this connection are significant of a large body of opinion in the south. He says: "The recent action of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal church was equivalent to an evasion of the matter, and little progress toward unification is to be hoped for until our northern brethren are willing to face the issue squarely and to declare without reservations what their convictions are. Accordingly we should give ourselves with new zeal to work in those border territories where we are already well planted and where there is manifest need for our ministries. It is by no means, however, our duty to spend money and to appoint preachers in fields already well occupied by another branch of Methodism. We have no special and superior version of Wesleyanism that warrants the wasting of the money and the men of the kingdom in maintaining altars hard by those already set up by a sister Methodism."

Baptists Use Former Priest as Home Missionary

A Baptist council was called at Rocky Ford, Col., recently, Juan Rodriguez was formally ordained to the ministry of the Baptist church, and settled as pastor over a Mexican congregation in Rocky Ford. Mr. Rodriguez has an interesting personal history. He was at one time a chap-

lain to the wife of President Diaz. She took a liking to him and sent him to a theological school in Rome where he was ordained to the full priesthood. After this his benefactress gave him money for a trip to the Holy Land. He then entered the service of the Roman Catholic church at Toluca, Mexico. While here he came into contact with evangelical religion. He entered the fellowship of a Baptist church in El Paso, and soon afterward came to Rocky Ford. Should he prove successful, he will without doubt prove of large use in the service of the Baptist denomination among the Mexican immigrants of this country. The problem of immigrant work has been largely that of securing native workers.

Jews Leave the Synagogue

The condition of Christian churches in New York has been exploited by magazine writers at different times and the situation has been set forth by provincially-minded persons as typical of that in the whole country. The situation among the million and a half Jews is not essentially different from that of the Christians. Rabbi Wise set forth recently some startling statistics with regard to the religious life of the Jews. He says: "There were more reformed synagogues in New York in my youth than there are today. There are 50,000 Jewish families between 50th street and 120th street, and I dare say that not 10 per cent of them are supporters of the synagogue."

Unitarian Drive not Complete Success

The Unitarian drive for three million dollars for their denominational work has at last reports fallen a little short of complete success. About two million has been subscribed and from this must be deducted the money that has been used for propaganda purposes and also the anticipated defalcation in pledges always incident to such a movement. In comparison with their membership, however, the Unitarians have given more generously than any other religious body in America in the recent drives. More money may yet be subscribed. If the money is used wisely, it ought to go a long way toward rejuvenating a denomination which in recent years has been losing membership, and which has been showing some signs of senile decay.

What Baptist Ministers Are Interested In

The program of the Baptist Ministerial Association of Chicago for November and December, is interesting as being an indication of the interests of Chicago Baptists. Two addresses on evangelistic themes fall within this period. Dr. Frederic Shannon addressed the organization on "The Soul of the Pilgrims." Another outsider to appear

before the Baptists was Dr. C. B. McAfee of McCormick Theological Seminary who spoke on "The Personality of God." There were two addresses on the state of the Baptist cause in Europe at the present time.

Son of Noted Scholar Becomes Rector

Dr. A. C. McGiffert of Union Theological Seminary has had the satisfaction of seeing his son ordained to the ministry. Recently the Rev. Arthur Cushman McGiffert, Jr., was installed as pastor of All Soul's Church, Lowell, Mass.

Consolidation of Religious Journals

The University of Chicago Press has for many years published two religious journals, the Biblical World, a monthly, and the American Journal of Theology, a quarterly. These will be consolidated in 1921, and the new journal will be called the Journal of Religion. It will be issued bi-monthly. It will cover the fields of Biblical religion, Christianity, religious education, church life and the religious organization of social movements. Dr. Gerald Birney Smith, former editor of the quarterly, will be the editor of the new journal.

Evensong in a Congregational Church

The interchange of pulpits between Episcopal and non-episcopal churches has often provoked discussion, but a recent union meeting in Brooklyn goes quite beyond precedent. On a recent Sunday evening the congregations of St. Matthew and of the Church of the Good Shepherd, along with their rectors, came over to the Tompkins Avenue Congregational church, and joined in a union service. The rectors read the Episcopal evensong, and the remainder of the service was conducted by Dr. J. Percival Huget, pastor of the Congregational church. Among other things, the latter said: "The Lambeth Conference gives good hope of the rise of a real Catholic church of the English-speaking world, organized, united and disciplined, yet remaining free, which is such a church as is needed to fight down the world powers of darkness."

Fire in Historic Church

Fire has greatly damaged the annex of the old Plymouth church, made famous by the ministry of Henry Ward Beecher, and now led by Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis. The first press despatches indicated that the war relics in the historical room had been destroyed, but happily this report has proven to be erroneous. Smoke has damaged the decorations of the church and the fire has destroyed a number of the fine windows setting forth the "Influence of Puritanism upon the Institutions of the Republic." The fire

loss is about \$150,000, but this is fully covered by insurance. The relics that have survived the fire are of great historic significance. There is a pulpit used by Lyman Beecher when he preached a celebrated sermon against duelling, following the duel of Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton. There is a clock face taken from the church in which Lyman Beecher inaugurated the temperance crusade in 1798 which finally resulted in the complete overthrow of the saloon. Some of the manuscripts of the Beecher sermons against slavery are also in this church, besides a number of Beecher portraits. Plymouth church will meet in a music hall until the damage wrought by the fire is repaired.

The Golden Rule in Business

The world is usually surprised when a Christian man undertakes to apply his religion to his business. That is just the reason why there was so much astonishment over the country at the recent action of the Nash Manufacturing Company of Cincinnati. Some years ago, the president and general manager of this factory decided to begin the application of the Golden Rule to his business. That this Golden Rule method has not failed is indicated by a press despatch which stated recently that 500 of his employees would give up their positions for one month this winter in order that the unemployed of the city might be given employment. The month will be either January or February.

Episcopalians Will Ask for Large Giving

The Protestant Episcopal church has planned a campaign running through the next three years which has a budget of \$46,000,000. This amount is far in excess of previous standards of giving within the church. If the amount were prorated among the members, it would come to \$14.39 per member. Many large gifts are required, however, to realize this amount.

Industrial Investigation in Denver

The street car strike in Denver the past year had reached a pass where the transportation of the city had completely broken down and where murder was being substituted for conference. General pessimism had settled down on the city when a movement was inaugurated by the church people of the city to make an investigation. Dr. Edward T. Devine was brought on to represent the Protestant forces and the Catholics brought Dr. John A. Ryan and Dr. John A. Lapp of the Catholic Welfare Council. These investigators represented all of the religious people of the city, Protestant, Catholic and Jewish. In view of this impressive front, the company and the union were both willing to be interviewed. It would not have been diplomatic to refuse the representatives of organized religions a conference. The findings of the committee have been brought in, and are now undergoing revision. As

soon as they have been completed they will be published. The Federal Council has inaugurated a research department which will carry on many pieces of research like that conducted in Denver and the results will be given the public. Hitherto the public has gotten its information on any given labor trouble from highly colored sources. Henceforth the public opinion may be formed by facts gathered by impartial investigators.

Dr. Jowett Has Been Compelled to Take a Rest

Dr. J. H. Jewett is one of the most tireless workers in the Christian world. His labors in the pulpit and with his pen have been arduous for a number of years. Recently his health has broken and his London congregation has granted him a six months leave of absence. He has already departed for the southern shores of France where he will spend the winter.

Social Service Departments Will Co-operate

The new research department of the Federal Council will utilize the social service departments of the various denominations to secure accurate information with regard to the industrial controversies. It is believed by the leaders of the Federal Council that accurate information about industrial disputes is often unobtainable and that public opinion is often misguided in consequence. Miss Agnes Campbell has left the Education Society of the Congregational denomination to become an investigator for the new department. She is a Wellesley graduate. Other investigators will be added who have the special qualification necessary to this important work.

Former Baptist Church Becomes Peoples' Church

A form of theological dissent that was widely popular twenty-five years ago was the organization of a "Peoples' church by people who found the denominational bond irksome. With the increasing liberality of evangelical churches, this kind of organization is on the decrease. One notes, however, a revival of the idea in St. Louis this autumn. The former congregation of Central Baptist church, after a number of experiences with liberal preachers, has completely broken with the denomina-

tion, and united with a liberal organization under the leadership of Dr. D. V. Bush. The new organization will be called the "Central People's Church" and it will hold Sunday services in the Odeon. About one hundred members of the Central Baptist church are going into the new organization, many others having united with Baptist churches of the city.

Transformation of the Sunday Evening Service

The difficulties of the conventional second service in the church has led to radical experimentation even on the part of the very orthodox. So evangelical a pastor as Dr. A. Z. Conrad has been discussing current events on Sunday evenings at Park Street Congregational Church, of Boston. Some cities are organized to hold a single union service at which out-of-town celebrities speak. The Forum type of service has been worked out in a number of communities. Meanwhile there are some signs of a revival of interest in the old-time service of the gospel for the individual soul in some cities.

Methodist Overhead Organization Meets

The new Methodist overhead organization known as the Council of the Boards of Benevolence of the Methodist Episcopal church met recently in Boston. There were one hundred and fifteen representatives of various boards, including fifteen bishops. At this meeting a statement was made of the total amount subscribed in the campaign. This amount was \$21,353,927 per year for five years. It is planned to carry out a new campaign which will appeal to several classes of members. These are as follows: "those who did not subscribe when the first canvas was made; those who subscribed inadequately; those who subscribed for one year only; those who have paid their subscriptions in full who should be solic-

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ited again; those who have had a new world vision; those who have had unusual prosperity; all members coming from other charges who would be seen about transferring the unpaid portion of their subscription or canvassed for new centenary subscription; all who have recently united with the church, of which over 200,000 are reported." It is also planned to go out after large gifts for the various constituent boards.

Former Religious Editor Becomes Scenario Editor

Mr. Willard Price who came to prominence as editor of the World Outlook until the journal was consolidated with the Christian Herald, has accepted a position with the International Church Film Corporation. He has travelled in the various mission lands with a camera, and knows the interest of the church. While editing the Outlook his distinctive contribution to religious journalism was the use of pictures. He says: "The picture, through the eye of the camera, is as real as the life it visualizes. Indeed, as an instrument of instruction, it improves on life because it can portray not only physical objects, but the evolution of thought, the play of conscience. It lays bare the hidden moral forces which control the lives of men. The motion picture knows no language and needs none. A film can reach a Laplander as easily as an African; the antics of a Charlie Chaplin are applauded in every land by peoples who cannot read

a newspaper. This movement to place clean, wholesome pictures in the Church should have the support of every person who has the Church's welfare at heart."

Disciples Ministers Go Out to Explore the City

It is a part of the program of the Chicago Disciples Ministerial Association this year to spend some Mondays in exploring the city and its problems. On a recent Monday, led by Rev. Karl Borders, the ministers visited the juvenile court, and heard some cases that were brought before the judge. They then went to lunch together, and discussed the cases they had heard. Future journeys will take the ministers to immigrant centers, settlement houses and the various uplift institutions.

New Head for Board of Temperance and Social Welfare

The Board of Temperance and Social Welfare of the Disciples of Christ will broaden out its activities in the coming years, and will include within its scope the work previously done by the Social Service Commission which was attracted to the American Christian Missionary Society. Prof. Alva W. Taylor, of Missouri College of the Bible, was recently called to the secretaryship of the organization, and he will be relieved of his duties at Columbia to open an office in Chicago. The board is transferring its activities to Chicago that Mr. Taylor may

have a better laboratory for his service and investigations. Mr. Taylor was formerly pastor of Irving Park church of Chicago, and has had a wide experience as preacher, teacher, lecturer and journalist.

Home Missionaries Are Honored

The Presbyterian Woman's Board of Home Missions recently gave a token of recognition to its missionaries who have been in service for over 25 years. Thirteen missionaries have served a total of 445 years, or an average of 29 years each. The missionary longest in service is Miss Elizabeth Craig who is located at Taos, New Mexico. The token is a pin in blue enamel with a rim of gold in which is engraved the year in which the missionary entered the service. The name of the missionary is engraved on the reverse side.

Long Expected Work of Dr. Burton Appears

The long expected commentary on Galatians by Professor Ernest DeWitt Burton is now in print. It comes in the International Commentary series. Dr. Burton has spent twenty-five years in the preparation of this work and it will probably take front rank as a discussion of the problems arising in the interpretation of the epistle. Dr. Burton in co-operation with Dr. Goodspeed has recently brought out a harmony of the synoptic gospels in Greek. Though not

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always vigorous in health, Dr. Burton has borne through the years a heavy burden of teaching, writing and denominational service in the Baptist denomination. All his work is marked with the painstaking care which is characteristic of the man.

Salary Increase of a Thousand Dollars

Many churches are increasing the salary of their ministers. A noteworthy instance is that of Central Christian Church, Jacksonville, Ill., recently given. At the close of a series of evangelistic meetings the new members pledged \$1,200 to the church, and the board at once voted to grant the pastor, Rev. M. L. Pontius, an increase of salary of a thousand dollars.

Kansas City Federation Being Reorganized

One of the few large cities of the country without a church federation is Kansas City. The old organization became defunct about eighteen years ago. It had depended for economic support upon the gifts of individuals, and it is thought that this precarious economic support was the cause of its untimely demise. Efforts are now being made to revive the federation, Rev. Roy B. Guild of the Federal Council having visited the city several times recently on that mission. No action has been taken yet with regard to an executive secretary, but rumor points in the direction of Dr. Morris

Turk, pastor of Westminster Congregational church. It is thought that a completely new organization of the churches of the city will be completed within the next three months.

Magazine Features Story of Community Church

The community church is sufficiently interesting to the general public that the American Magazine in a recent issue features the story of the community church at Oakmount, Penn. Grace Chapel is the only Protestant church in town and includes in its membership representatives of nearly all the protestant sects. All except 23 adults in the town who are not Catholics are members of this church. Recently a four thousand dollar pipe organ was installed. The missionary and benevolent work done by the congregation reaches an impressive total. These community churches are rapidly increasing in number.

Bible Fundamentals Conference

The Bible conferences which are being held in various sections of the country under conservative leadership are resulting in a great stiffening of the conservative consciousness and much suspicion and ill-will toward those who are of another mind theologically. A Baptist conference on fundamentals was held recently at Brooks Bible Institute in St. Louis. Among the prominent speakers were Rev. Charles M. Sheldon and Dr. W. B.

Riley. Dr. Riley is prophesying a world famine of Bible study and understanding as a prelude to the coming of the millennium. Some of the meetings were also held in First Baptist church, and were open to the general public.

Community Service of Baptist Church

The ideal of a working church is well realized by First Baptist church of Philadelphia. The announcements include a wide variety of activities. There are classes in Spanish and dressmaking. The gymnasium provides classes in physical culture as well as games and recreation. The church provides a lunch room where working young people may come and eat their lunches, and where coffee and tea are served free. The community program of a socially-minded church must be worked out by experimentation and must be adapted to neighborhood needs. This church seems to have gone far in the direction of a working program of service in the community life.

Roman Catholics Criticize the Archbishop

The American spirit refuses to be bound even by the restraints of an autocratic religious organization. Sixty Roman Catholics in New York have recently joined in a written protest to their archbishop for allowing his cathedral to be turned into "an Irish club." From the cathedral went the mob that attacked Union Club for displaying the Union

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Jack on a holiday along with the flag of the United States. The Archbishop has no patience with the protest and calls it "as nice a piece of religious Bolshevism as I ever expect to look upon."

Missionary Starts Movement on Inheritance Tax

The American government has a method of penalizing millionaires who live abroad to evade taxes in this country. An extra tax is levied on the estate of a man who dies abroad. This law has worked a hardship on the children of missionaries who must depend upon a pittance to carry them through years of dependence. Mr. Henry W. Jessup, a Presbyterian elder of New York, has drawn up a petition to Congress that the law be changed to exempt missionaries from this extra tax.

Y. W. C. A. Has Movement for Girls

There is no lack of organizations now for girls in which the ideals of the outdoor life are cultivated. The Girl Scouts and the Camp Fire Girl organizations are well known. The Y. W. C. A. has enrolled more than a hundred thousand girls between the ages of twelve and eighteen and these girls are taught to become "all-around girls."

Sunday School People Change Convention Plans

The next international convention of the Sunday School Association will be

held in Kansas City in 1922. The plans for the coming convention indicate a complete change of front on the part of the Sunday school leaders. Instead of trying to produce a great mass convention which would be impressive for its size, the effort will be toward quality. The convention may not have more than two thousand delegates and these will be prominent workers in the field of religious education.

Will Open Home for Mexicans

The work among the Mexican immigrants of this country is assuming larger proportions every month. The Presbyterian church of Redlands has recently opened a house which is called "The Home of Neighborly Service." On this home a budget of four thousand dollars will be spent during the coming year. It will be directed by Miss Margaret Walker. It is hoped that the Spanish-speaking residents of the city may be gathered into this home for fellowship with the Americans of the town.

University Preachers at Chicago

Professor Albert Parker Fitch of Amherst College, was the university preacher at the University of Chicago Dec. 5. On Dec. 12, Rev. James Gordon Gilkey, pastor of South Congregational church, of Springfield, Mass., delivered the sermon. Convocation will be held at the

university Dec. 19, and the speaker on that occasion will be Rev. Latham A. Crandall, D.D., editor of the Baptist. Dr. Crandall has held pastorates in New York, Cleveland, Chicago and Minneapolis and is well known in the journalistic field.

Use a Preacher on Good Roads Trip

A group of motor dealers recently made a tour of Missouri in behalf of a sixty million dollar bond issue to "lift Missouri out of the mud." The party that made the trip chose Rev. Joseph Myers, Jr., of Kansas City, to be its spokesman. Short meetings were held in various towns and the cause of good roads was presented not only from the standpoint of the convenience of motorists but also in the light of economic and social values. The theory that ministers and business men do not mix very well was abundantly disproved by the fellowship of the motor dealers with their preacher-spokesman.

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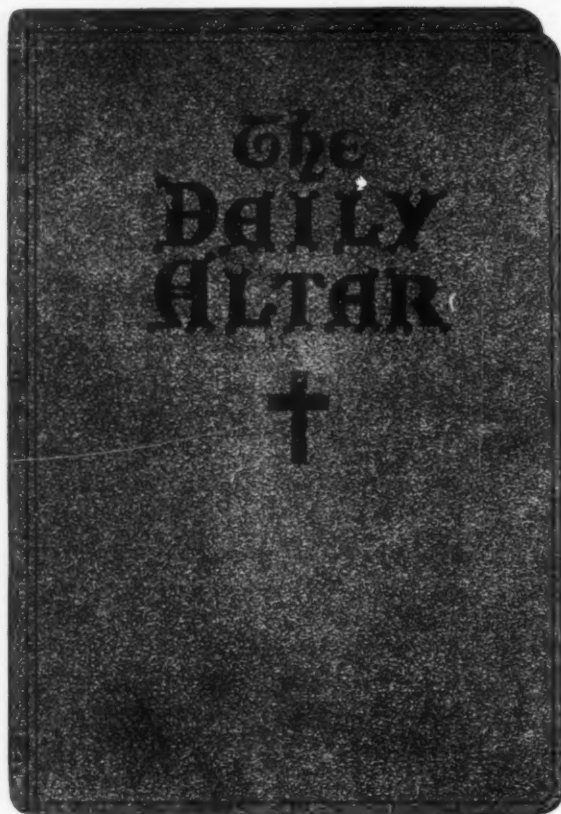
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